

OBJECTIVE
03

To support reconciliation, dialogue, closer relationship and trust between the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot communities

ENCOUNTERS FOR A WIDE PUBLIC CYPRIOT COASTLINE

IMAGINARY FAMAGUSTA INITIATIVE

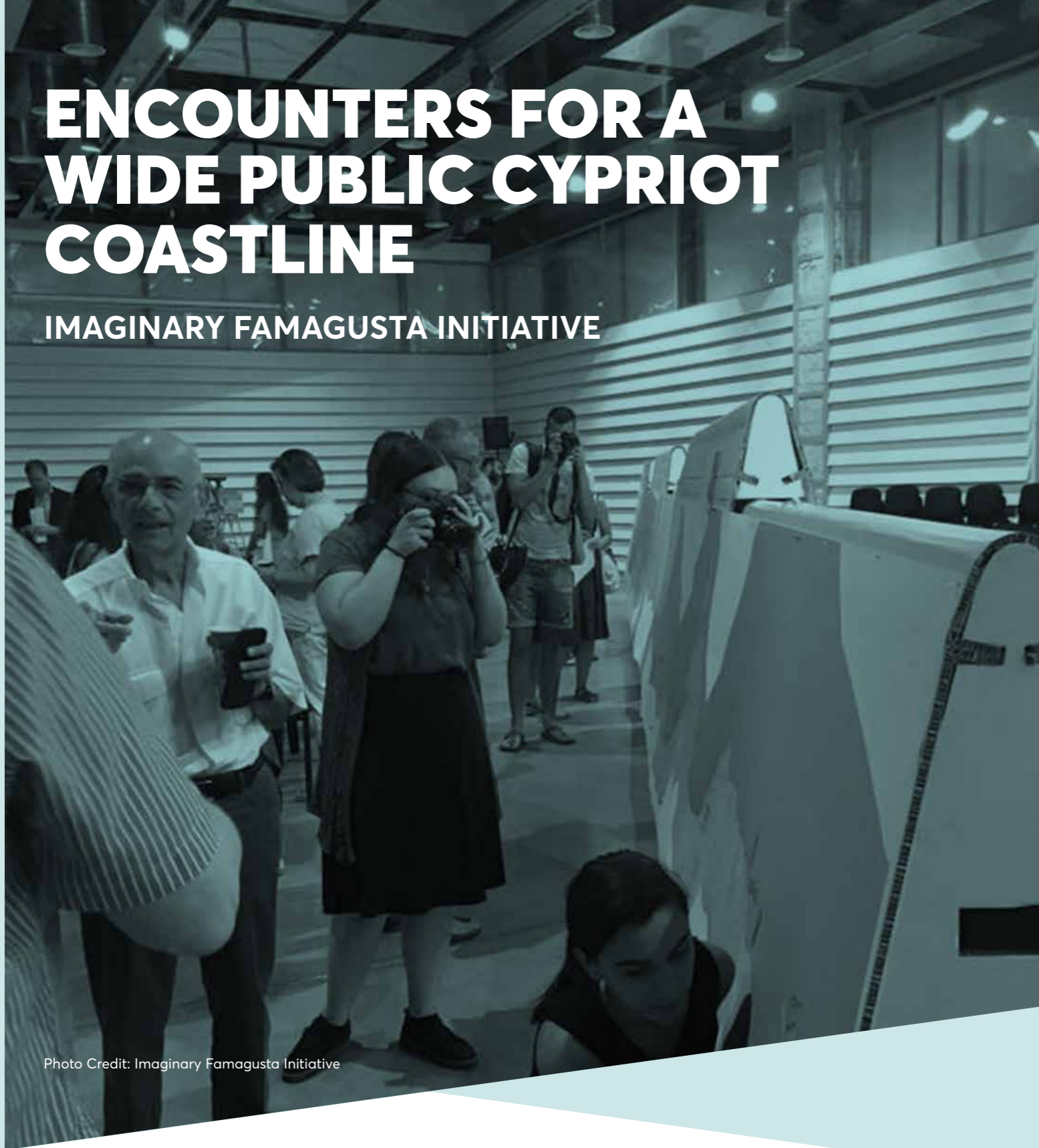


Photo Credit: Imaginary Famagusta Initiative



ABOUT THE HANDS-ON FAMAGUSTA PROJECT AND THE IMAGINARY FAMAGUSTA INITIATIVE

The action is a part of Hands-on Famagusta project implemented by Imaginary Famagusta Initiative. Hands-on Famagusta is a project created to develop and support alternative future scenarios for non-divided Famagusta in a unified Cyprus. It conceived diverse tools including a trilingual web-platform that features a 'What if?' game to help users go through decision-making processes on urban issues in Famagusta. Other tools include 3D visuals and a large city model aiming to change the negative perception of the city. Moreover, a book gathering the tools, experiences and the theoretical background of the project was published to bring the discussion in the international arena.

THIS ACTION INVOLVED

A workshop entitled "Encounters for a Wide Public Cypriot Coastline" on 1 July 2017, in Limassol.

STORY OF THE ACTION

The Hands-on Famagusta team implemented two distinct but complementary Grow Civic actions, to address the need for a wide public Cypriot coastline. A workshop and an exhibition were held, highlighting the benefits of a unified coastline. The team aspired to diminish the challenges about the wide public waterfront by creating connections between reconstruction and reconciliation for Famagusta.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION

"We wanted to highlight urban issues in discussions attended by experts, stakeholders and citizens from both communities to provide the opportunity for negotiation and debate free of ethnic or religious views. When urban reconstruction goes hand in hand with reconciliation, new alliances of urban actors are created across the actual divides. We aimed to give a voice to those urban actors who could not find a wide public waterfront against the increasing tendencies of privatization in most coastal Cypriot cities. Consequently, natural and made heritage, as well as natural assets, would be represented in the process of urban reconstruction."

Esra Can Akbil

The event was a continuation of the "Hands-on Famagusta Encounters", gatherings of actors within a series of workshops, consultation meetings and public presentations being implemented since June 2014. The workshop evolved around the trilingual interactive web platform, connecting the specific challenges of changing the Famagustian public waterfront to that of Limassol. The roundtable discussions provided the opportunity for participants to set up initial connections and identify common concerns, which led to a possible umbrella institution aiming at contributing to and supporting the decision making processes for the future of the Cypriot coastlines.

Photo Credit: Imaginary Famagusta Initiative



"Direct beneficiaries of the event were initially identified as Famagustians, those living in the city and those who had to leave, the city itself including its entire human-made and natural heritage, and the Cypriots in general. The event managed to extend beyond the planned Famagustian context, and Cypriots and Cypriot cities in general were also in the center of the discussion, as Famagusta set a unique example to learn from, creating a possible model for the unified development of cities after a resolution in Cyprus."

Esra Can Akbil

The workshop consisted of two roundtable discussion sessions, followed by a mobile workshop/discussion tour along the contested sites in the Limassol coastline. The workshop studied the coastline of Cyprus as a whole, where the members of Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities had the chance to see beyond their ethnic and religious differences, building common arguments on coastlines towards a better future. It inspired and promoted experience-sharing between experts and activists.


RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

According to the team, during one of the workshop sessions, an architect from Limassol commented "you gave us a different perspective here. The idea of common Cypriot coastlines presents a continuous blue line that unites us and replaces the green line dividing Cyprus". That comment sums up one of the outcomes of the workshop: creating new alliances which consider reconciliation as the utmost importance. The action brought both Turkish and Greek Cypriot interested citizens, experts involved in decision-making processes, planners, and architects around the table. Several university academics and graduate students were also involved in the workshop and participated actively in the discussions.

By engaging different stakeholders in the event, the action highlighted different opinions from stakeholders on their common concerns, enabling duty-bearers to be actively involved in the discussions and formed new alliances to promote the work for a better future in a unified island.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The Initiative will continue promoting civil society involvement in urban transformation and a unified future. It will initiate other debate platforms for collective questioning or imagining the future of cities.

TO FIND MORE ABOUT THE ACTION  [handsonfamagusta](https://www.facebook.com/handsonfamagusta)
 www.handsonfamagusta.org



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